

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

CREATING AN INTERAGENCY WORKING MODEL

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ABSTRACT

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Today's security environment is vividly dissimilar from that of the Cold War era. Our previous policies that focused on containment of communism and borderline isolationism have evolved into those of fostering globalization and keen engagement with lukewarm and even neutral partners. The threats that face the United States and our allies are no longer a clearly defined nation state and its conventional military force, but rather a myriad of hazards and attacks from a variety of adversaries whose methods are unconventional and multi-dimensional. Although our policies have evolved in the past 15 years the national security structure, in particular the National Security Council system and the interagency arrangement, have not matured to effectively carry out our foreign policy nor produce the desired effects when addressing the full range of alternatives in today's interconnected world. This strategic research paper discusses how previous initiatives to improve the interagency process have not met their desired objectives, as well as identifies the restraints of the current interagency model. This paper recommends legislation that aligns regional responsibilities among the various government agencies, develops a regional foreign policy plan that addresses all elements of national power, and establishes an interagency hierarchy.

CREATING AN INTERAGENCY WORKING MODEL

The uncoordinated funding, policy decisions, authority, assigned geography, and many other issues separated State, Defense, Congress, the National Security Council, and other government agencies and made it difficult to pull complex engagement plans together.

—General Anthony Zinni USMC

The altering and shifting security environment of today's world is vividly dissimilar from that of the Cold War era. Over the past fifty years, our guiding principles regarding national security and foreign policy have shifted from containment of communism and borderline isolationism to the adoption and promotion of globalization and occasional unification with lukewarm or neutral partners. Globalization's endurance and our resultant compulsory policy of engagement have consequently made a relapse to isolationism nearly unfeasible. The way ahead will require more interaction with and assurances from the global community. Therefore, the information, economic, and diplomatic arms of national power must contribute more in our foreign policy and be more integrated with our military resources.

This strategic research paper will first examine previous proposals to improve the interagency process and assess whether they have met their desired objectives. It will then examine current initiatives in the interagency process and identify certain restraints in the existing model. Leaders from every facet of the United States Government have often referred to the interagency system as "broken," a term that has previously been used to assess our nation's military prior to the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. In 1982, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General David Jones U.S.A.F., essentially said, "The system is broken. I have tried to reform it from the inside, but I cannot. Congress is going to have to mandate necessary reforms."¹ For United States policy to flourish in the 21st century, the way ahead will require a departure from our traditional approach to the interagency system. Just as a monumental step like the Goldwater-Nichols Act was obligatory to fix a lack of "jointness" in our military, a like measure will be required to address the underperformance and splintered approach of the interagency system.

This research paper will therefore recommend legislation that establishes an interagency hierarchical structure to fill the current void, particularly between the strategic and operational levels. This structure will institute a regional interagency command that is accountable for developing an interagency foreign policy/operations plan centered on policy set forth by an enhanced National Security Council (NSC). This regional interagency body will be empowered to manage and direct all elements of national power at the operational and tactical levels.

Implementation of these initiatives through legislation will facilitate the refurbishment of the interagency system and its process, which in turn will generate regional platforms to effectively manage and direct all elements of national power. This is a titanic but attainable objective wherein progress will most likely be incremental and noticeable development, much like the progression of the joint concept in our military, could take years to witness. In spite of this, one thing is certain: Never in our nation's history has the interagency process neither received so much attention nor undergone such intense examination. This catalyst for reform, along with the current global picture, compels our national leaders to enact and ratify legislation that broadens integration beyond the military and includes all elements of our national power.

Our foreign policy plays out in a global arena that is multifaceted and referred to as volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous. To be sure, this complex environment and the presence of non-state and group actors aggravate the challenges associated with policy development and implementation due to a lack of potency associated with bilateral engagements. Dr. Finney (Political Advisor to the U.S. National Guard Bureau) and Ambassador Alphonse La Porta point out the new challenges for the diplomatic mission when they state;

In Europe, for example, NATO, the European Union (EU) Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and varying layers of top level consultative mechanisms, such as the Group of 8 (G-8), increasingly impact on and limit the scope of bilateral diplomatic missions.²

Indeed, benign contact with the global community, regardless of intensity or echelon, could create friction as a result from second and third order effects. Undeniably the threats that face our nation are no longer exclusively from a clearly defined sovereignty and its conventional military force but rather a myriad of tensions from a variety of groupings as well as threats or attacks from burgeoning antagonists and opponents whose methods are unconventional and multi-dimensional. Policy formulation and resultant planning must now account for a multitude of segments that were extraneous during the Cold War, but have become more pressing in the present day such as:

- Global Insurgency
- Contagious Diseases/AIDS
- Failed States/ Regime Change
- Terrorism
- Humanitarian Assistance
- WMD Deterrence and Control

- Border Control/Customs
- International Organized Crime/ Piracy
- Human Trafficking

The synchronization of relevant government agencies is essential for achievement when tackling the above missions and requires a systems approach. Assimilation of the assorted agencies at the strategic and operational levels is a paramount objective and one that is a prerequisite in order to affect foreign policy and contend with the above topics. In the future, our nation's ability to flourish while handling a political crisis, responding to a natural disaster, or intervening on behalf of the international community will be a direct result of our capacity to integrate the diplomatic, information, military, and economic elements of national power at the strategic and operational levels.

When considering today's interconnected world and regional alliances, the prospect of the United States undergoing a unilateral approach would not only be impracticable but improbable as well. Moreover, the talent to orchestrate any mission becomes more problematic when alliances, international organizations (IOs), coalitions, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are part of the equation. Not only has this become the standard in today's state of affairs but the number of organizations and the related support personnel and structure has dramatically increased in due time as well. "For example, during the Kurdish crisis in 1991, 28 NGOs were involved in providing humanitarian aid. In Somalia [1993], the number grew to 78. In Rwanda [1994], 170 NGOs were involved, while in Haiti [1994], over 400 NGOs— including local or indigenous organizations— were on the ground when U.S. troops landed."³ Although our nation's policies have evolved over the past 15 years since the end of the Cold War, the interagency process has not matured sufficiently to plan, and more importantly, direct and manage a successful multilateral complex contingency operation in the modern world.

By most standards the interagency process is portrayed predominately as ineffective. Most operational and strategic observers of various government and NGOs, IOs, as well as private organizations, would depict the process as cumbersome and filled with parochialism. The internal resolve of the respective agencies, institutions, and organizations for achievement is understandable, but limitations and constraints, such as structure and resources associated with the current system restrict initiative, effectiveness, and productivity due to a deficiency in unity of effort and fragmentation.

Limitations coupled to the interagency process and the restrictions associated with implementing foreign policy have not gone unnoticed by our nation's leadership. Both President Clinton and President George W. Bush issued presidential directives that attempted to address

the shortcomings of the interagency process evidenced in predicaments experienced by their respective administrations. In 1997, President Clinton's Presidential Decision Directive (PDD)-56 formally recognized the deficiencies in the interagency process and provided standard guidance in managing complex contingency operations based on lessons learned from various complex contingency operations in Bangladesh, Northern Iraq, Africa and Haiti.⁴ Almost ten years later President George W. Bush's National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD)-44, provided guidance to work with other countries and organizations to anticipate and prevent state failure as well as improving coordination, planning, and implementation for reconstruction and stabilization assistance for states or regions at risk from conflict or civil strife.⁵ However, these directives have demonstrated only modest innovation and progression for two fundamental reasons. First, both models lack any imposing doctrine or guidance regarding interagency planning, composition, or command and control arrangement. When addressing integration, Department of Defense, Joint Publication 3-08 states that military operations must be coordinated with the activities of other agencies of the USG..."⁶ Second, these directives failed to establish an integrated chain of command to lead the interagency process. To further complicate these issues, every time there is a turnover in the Whitehouse new procedures are established to manage the interagency process. This is accomplished through presidential directives, which are often viewed as non-binding due to their lack of staying power. In fact, most directives are often displaced by the incoming administration, as was the case with President Clinton's directive on the interagency process.

Joint Pub 3-08 further states, "The various USG agencies' different, and sometimes conflicting, goals, policies, procedures, and decision-making techniques make unity of effort a challenge."⁷ Therefore, many would profess that resolution for the interagency quandary resides in education, duty assignments, cross training, standard operating procedures, or the creation of various interagency groups at the operational and tactical levels. On the surface these solutions appear to be suitable, as many believe they can be employed through gradual and measured implementation without traumatic side effects. However, they fail to address the requirement for a legitimate and recognized unity of command, which is essential for unity of effort.

Additionally, these proposed universal cure-alls depend wholly on agreeable personalities, groupthink and consensus, and a lot of luck. Some would contend the assorted agencies' different cultures, definitions of leadership, political attitudes and viewpoints, and doctrine (or lack thereof) stifles any opportunity for unity of effort. To the contrary, these diverse characteristics and traits in fact compliment one another and bring different perspectives,

experiences, and skill sets to the table. If furnished with an authentic order, the interagency body will yield results that far exceed the sum of their individual achievements. Also, it is crucial for each agency to contribute its unique perspective to the planning, development, and implementation of foreign policy and any attempt to renovate an agency's organizational culture would prove unconstructive to our national objectives. Unity of effort through unity of command will preserve the unique and valuable attributes that each agency possesses and contributes to the effort. This is evidenced daily at the operational and tactical levels by the various military services' propensity to excel in the joint environment, yet maintain their own culture and service specific capabilities. Consequently, the assumed embedded transition from policy development to policy implementation remains vacuous in the current model. This trend will continue pending unity of effort that is a consequence of unity of command. Any optimism of a functional interagency system will remain a chimera until sweeping measures are implemented throughout all levels of the interagency system.

Enhancing the National Security Council

The inauguration of the United States of America found a structure of government that was straightforward and one that afforded the President to essentially function as his own Chief of Staff. At the time, this rudimentary and undemanding arrangement of government was considered avant-garde and laudable for the circumstances. However, the competence of this unadorned institution soon proved incapable of managing an emerging landscape as our nation grew in population, gained more territory, and incurred the associated responsibilities of a promising power. In turn, the structure and size of government was obliged to develop and mature accordingly. Unfortunately, segments of our nation's bureaucracy have failed to mature or amend their configuration and composition to face the new challenges of the post Cold War environment and the 21st century arena.

Over time, monumental changes in our nation's bureaucratic architecture have been required to address the challenges of both the domestic and international domains. For example, President Franklin D. Roosevelt made dramatic changes in 1933 to address grave domestic issues resulting from the Great Depression and in the aftermath of World War II, President Harry Truman carried out a historic reorganization of the United States national security structure. Once again our nation is obliged to transform in order to cope with today's challenges. This will require far-reaching changes to our national security structure, much like President Truman's National Security Act of 1947 (NSA-47). The Department of State describes NSA-47 as follows:

The National Security Act of 1947 mandated reorganization of the foreign policy and military establishments of the U.S. Government. The act created many of the institutions that the Presidents found useful when formulating and implementing foreign policy, including the National Security Council (NSC). The Council itself included the President, Vice-President, Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense, and other members (such as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency), who met at the White House to discuss both long-term problems and more immediate national security crises.⁸

The NSC system remains the appropriate body for foreign policy development and the related ensuing supervision, but seems feeble in its current state when weighed against the effects of globalization, the information age, and the eroding Westphalian concept of sovereign responsibility.

Various authorities have formerly observed the Council's lacking membership. In 1992 a bipartisan commission, co-sponsored by the Carnegie Endowment, whose members included Richard Holbrooke and Madeleine K. Albright, noted, "The NSC system remains an essential safeguard for the nation's security-but it should be modernized and better integrated...to deal more effectively with the "new" economic and global issues."⁹ Unfortunately, more than half a century after its inception, the contemporary National Security Council, in essence, reflects the same composition as the original. It is clearly evident that the National Security Council has not matured to manage current global trade and industry as well as security issues. The current administration defines the Council as follows:

The National Security Council is chaired by the President. Its regular attendees (both statutory and non-statutory) are the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the statutory military advisor to the Council, and the Director of National Intelligence is the intelligence advisor. The Chief of Staff to the President, Counsel to the President, and the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy are invited to attend any NSC meeting. The Attorney General and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget are invited to attend meetings pertaining to their responsibilities. The heads of other executive departments and agencies, as well as other senior officials, are invited to attend meetings of the NSC when appropriate.¹⁰

Although the administration permits attendance by non-statutory members "pertaining to their responsibilities" and other executives and senior officials are invited "when appropriate," there remains no coherent configuration to the NSC proper and the system. Each administration should be afforded some latitude to shape the NSC system to better reflect the President's leadership style. However, there must be some form of continuity within the NSC system to offset the substitutions coupled to a new administration. Continuity, both in size and

purpose, of the NSC system remains an intangible objective. Administration changes and off year elections often alter the NSC system. “The NSC staff, known as the Executive Secretariat, has varied in size and function. In 1999 the staff comprised about 208 professionals covering regional and functional responsibilities...Under the George W. Bush administration, the NSC staff was cut to nearly half.”¹¹

Although each president has carte blanche to invite any person to attend any meeting or committee in order to address a specific situation, a robust and recognized structure that has the capacity to address all issues at all times must be formalized. Legislation that enhances the statutory membership of the council to include: Secretary of Treasury, United States Agency for International Development, the Attorney General, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Secretary of Energy, Secretary of Agriculture, Secretary of Health and Human Services, and cabinet rank members such as Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Trade Representative will be an initial step to clearly demonstrate our national resolve to enhance the interagency process at the strategic level.

Aligning the Regions

Unity of effort without cohesive guidance will prove impotent if there is no central focus to those in the planning and decision-making process. Currently the regional responsibilities of the Department of Defense (Combatant Commands), Department of State (Assistant Secretaries for Regional Affairs), and the Central Intelligence Agency do not compliment one another. Additionally, the regions established for the Policy Coordination Committees within the NSC system do not resemble those of the other agencies. “As a result, U.S. government programs and actions in a region are often uncoordinated...or entirely incoherent (as in one agency’s actions contradicting or conflicting with another’s).”¹² An initially step that is essential to jump-start the fixing of the interagency system is to standardize the regional boundaries across the various agencies. This will generate efficiencies and unity of effort throughout the interagency process.

“The National Security Council (NSC) should lead an interagency review of how various agencies divide the world into regions for the purposes of policy execution, with the aim of creating a common regional framework that could be used across the U.S. Government.”¹³ Framing the regions would require consideration of language, operational issues, culture, geographic considerations, and any recognized standing alliances or unions. Additionally, each regional team would be task organized to better influence its specific area of responsibility. Of all the matters identified for consideration when defining regional responsibilities, culture should

be the priority. Culture as a cornerstone will generate a more incorporated and therefore more effective regional structure. A proposed regional breakdown that focuses on cultural considerations could be:

- African Region (Continent, Madagascar)
- North American Region (North America, Greenland, Iceland)
- South American Region (South America and Central America)
- Pacific Region (Western Pacific Rim, Indonesia, China, India)
- Western European Region (should consider European Union composition)
- Eastern European Region
- Middle East

Much like the Unified Command Plan for the Department of Defense, the area of responsibility (AOR) of the respective regions could be reevaluated and modified to account for any shift in executive policy or the global political landscape.

Regional Foreign Policy Plans

Historically, a regional combatant commander's operations plan has been referred to as a war plan. The term foreign policy is a better model than war to convey what we are really addressing—conflict and struggle. Conflict and struggle are constant and present on all levels with an assortment of actors and the only variables being the form of discord and the threshold of harmony. Hundreds of years ago, the early strategist Carl von Clausewitz noted that war is an instrument of policy by other means.¹⁴ Today, modern day strategists and subject matter experts from numerous disciplines are in agreement with Clausewitz. Consequently, operations plans should be revamped accordingly and designated as foreign policy plans. These foreign policy plans would encompass and integrate the entire spectrum of our national means. Although the dominate phase of an operations plan remains critical, the reality that tensions never terminate but rather vary in measure or morph from one domain to another mandates a foreign policy plan that addresses the full spectrum of national power and at all levels of pressure.

Customarily the term war has been coupled with any campaign. As mentioned earlier, the armed fight is just one aspect of foreign policy (conflict and struggle) and characterization is much more encompassing. Regrettably, various USG agencies, particularly the State Department, have had minimal participation in the construction of operations plans. Therefore, the military drafters of contingency plans were forced to formulate their own assumptions regarding policy or political guidance.¹⁵ These assumptions often failed to identify key

diplomatic and economic aspects when planning and implementing foreign policy. Understandably, the focal point for planners (military) is seizing the initiative and then dominating during the kinetic phase and post hostility issues are often an afterthought. This became evident in Iraq when our “traditional focus of winning wars eclipsed the planning and preparation for winning the peace, making the latter an oft-neglected stepchild in the planning process.”¹⁶

It is obvious then that regional operations plans should be interagency plans and not solely military in nature. As the Task Force Commander for Operation Restore Hope (Somalia) noted, “Operational planners first had to obtain and understand the political, economic, and social objectives of the operation. Only then could the military conditions that would be required to support the strategic end state be identified and a plan developed to meet them.”¹⁷ Under current doctrine the opposite is true.

Complex contingency operations are a concerted effort among various governmental agencies, NGOs and IOs and the inter-agency process is much too important to be marginalized as a side bar issue of a combatant commander’s operations plan. “We must get beyond the current process of “interagency-izing” military campaign plans and develop true interagency operations plans that meet common objectives articulated by the President and the NSC.”¹⁸ Due to their planning culture and extensive training, the military planners could assume the lead in developing the regional foreign policy plan, but the other agencies must have proportionate influence during the construction of the plan, specifically the shaping and post hostilities phases.

Who’s in Charge?

“The United States needs a new national security architecture, one that will make integration, shared forces, consistency of approach and unity of effort the defining characteristics of U.S. national security policy.”¹⁹ Indeed, the impact of globalization and the information age environment justifies a closer look at the current architecture and bureaucracy of the interagency system and its process. Unfortunately, mentioning bureaucracy even to bureaucrats will most often produce a disparaging reaction. Due to the diverse nature of the various agencies, unity of effort will prove an elusive ambition without unified guidance that is directive in nature. This will only result from a clear and unquestioned unity of command that is traced to the highest level of government.

An established and robust hierarchy is essential for accomplishing objectives in the interagency system. Elliott Jaques, an organizational theorist with over 35 years experience

states, “managerial hierarchy is the most efficient, the hardest, and in fact the most natural structure ever devised for large organizations. Properly structured, hierarchy can release energy and creativity, rationalize productivity, and actually improve morale.”²⁰ Establishing a clear chain of command (hierarchy) that links the operational and various strategic levels is essential for unity of effort. Many feel that the cabinet members and their respective personnel operate with a parochial agenda and that unity of effort by means of unity of command is beyond our reach. They also claim that the system is too big and beyond anyone’s scope. Elements of these claims may be correct if we practiced a true cabinet government. But, the United States does not practice cabinet government, at least in the parliamentary sense. It has cabinet members, but the cabinet does not make decisions— the president does, and that distinction is central to America’s system of government.²¹

But who gets the handoff once the president makes a decision regarding foreign policy? The current policy of establishing a lead agency at the strategic level has boundaries and fails to provide an honest broker as the respective agency will most likely gravitate to its own identity and revert to a parochial approach. “While the lead-agency model may work at the tactical level, where the capabilities of a single agency are most appropriate to the task at hand, only the NSC can play the role of honest broker in coordinating the planning and oversight of interagency operations at the strategic level.”²² The NSC System is the only U.S. Government structure capable of effectively planning and implementing a directive that encompasses the full spectrum of our national power. Any other agency is bound to be insufficient due to clashes, frictions and lack of any enforceable directive authority. In contrast, the NSC is designed to sit above the individual agencies and already integrates different perspectives into coherent national policy and this suits it for the mission at hand.²³

“The NSC should be recast from its traditional role of preparing decisions for the President to more active involvement in ensuring that Presidential intent is realized through USG actions.”²⁴ The NSC system is ideal for policy development but lacks the structure to function as an operational body, one that can direct and lead at the strategic level. A White House Deputy Chief of Staff position should be created to function as managing director for operations within the NSC. This position would be a Presidential appointment that is Senate confirmed. This would reduce the direct report requirements to the president and allow the National Security Advisor to concentrate on policy development and guidance.

Interagency Commands at the Operational Level

Seven major elements of National Power; diplomatic, information, military and economic, finance, intelligence, and law enforcement are the tools (means) our leaders utilize to forge our nation's policies and attain the desired objectives (ends). Of these, only the military element truly falls under the scope of the Department of Defense. However, contributing factors such as culture, resources, and directive authority have previously placed our Defense Department at the head of the interagency table at the operational level, and by default, as the lead element for the planning and shaping of regional objectives. The Clinton administration, which stressed engagement and multilateralism, allowed the Department of Defense, particularly the combatant commanders, to be responsible for much of the interagency process and the shaping of their regions. Former Commander in Chief (CINC) of Central Command under President Clinton, General Anthony Zinni notes, "During my time as a CINC, I was asked to carry out presidential and other diplomatic missions that would normally have fallen to diplomats."²⁵ General Zinni further acknowledges that the role of the Theater Commanders was expanded beyond the long-established role of respond and prepare when he observes, "...the CINCs had become far more than war-fighters; and the Clinton administration gave the CINCs all around the world a mission to shape their regions and use multilateral approaches in ways that went beyond the CINCs' traditional military role. This was not simply a wish. The administration strongly promoted and stressed this change; and they made it very clear that they wanted the CINCs to implement it."²⁶

The utilization of the combatant commanders to facilitate foreign policy, although praiseworthy, falls short on two accounts. First, the combatant commanders and their respective staffs do not possess the competence and corporate knowledge obligatory to shape a specific region utilizing all the elements of national power, specifically the skills acquired by Foreign Service officers through experiential learning gained through a career in the diplomatic discipline. Indeed, the interagency process and the conduct of multilateral complex operations surpass the threshold of the unified commander or the head of any one agency. Second, this approach places a military commander, as opposed to a diplomat, as the face of our government when interacting with foreign leaders, and therefore undermines one of our nation's paramount concepts of civilian leadership of our military. General Zinni acknowledges this vital concern when he comments, "It was important, in my mind, to always demonstrate civilian leadership of our military"²⁷ The empowerment of the Combatant Commanders to shape aspects of their regions that resided outside their domain can be directly attributed to a void in the interagency structure at the operational level.

To fill the void in the interagency process at the operational level, combatant commanders established Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACGs). These JIACGs were intended to “bring interagency perspectives into their planning and operations.”²⁸ Unfortunately, these JIACGs were implemented at varying degrees and with no standard structure. More importantly, the JIACGs were purely liaisons that could advise and provide recommendations but had no tangible influence or directive authority, which rendered the JIACG model basically ineffective. A former member of the CENTCOM JIACG during Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) noted, “the Joint Staff confirmed JIACG’s counterterrorism mission, prohibiting it from making policy, tasking non-DoD personnel, or altering lines of authority and coordination already in place.”²⁹

On the surface the lack of standardization and doctrinal guidance appears to be the main contributor to a JIACG’s inefficiency. However, the true dilemma resides in the compilation’s title, “group.” Individuals not groups are held accountable. Elliot Jaques states, “All the theorists refer to group authority, group decisions, and group consensus, none of them to group accountability.”³⁰ To emphasize the predicament with this arrangement, Jaques further notes, “group authority without group accountability is dysfunctional, and group authority with group accountability is unacceptable.”³¹ Therefore, any organization that attempts to utilize a group in an authoritative capacity, cannot expect to hold that group liable for its performance for the simple reason that the group never was accountable.

If the regional combatant commander or an interagency group, such as a JIACG, is not the answer, then who should be in charge of each region? It is evident that the group-think concept is not a viable solution in a large bureaucracy, such as the U.S. government and that leaves us with an individual. As mentioned earlier, the idea of a military commander in charge of various government agencies is not in line with our national culture. Moreover, our nation’s tenant of civilian leadership of our military must be unambiguous to the international community. Therefore, a Presidential appointee that is Senate confirmed is the most appropriate solution. This regional “czar” would report to the President through the NSC and be responsible for developing and implementing a foreign policy plan for his or her region. This foreign policy plan would incorporate all elements of national power and would provide principal guidance for the ambassadors and their respective country teams at the tactical level. Establishing a regional (operational level) authority over the ambassadors (tactical level) will also facilitate a unified approach to each region’s foreign policy and negate unilateral action by the ambassador and the respective country team.

Establishing a regional command that incorporates operational elements of the various agencies is the most significant component to a resolution. The structure of each regional command will be task organized to shape its respective region through efficient and effective foreign policy. Staffing these regional commands calls for a deviation from traditional thought based on agency title instead of required capabilities. For example, the economic element of our national power is routinely defaulted to Department of Commerce, which is domestic in nature and is “to create the conditions for economic growth and opportunity by promoting innovation, entrepreneurship, competitiveness, and stewardship.”³² Preferably, facilitating economic stability, reconstruction, and growth abroad would be better suited for the U.S. Agency for International Development, whose mission is foreign assistance and one that encompasses education, health, environmental, and agriculture support.³³

Conclusion

Elliot Jaques clearly conveys the significance and merit of the hierarchical form of organization when he states:

The hierarchy kind of organization we call bureaucracy did not emerge accidentally. It is the only form of organization that can...employ large numbers of people and yet preserve unambiguous accountability for the work they do. And that is why, despite its problems, it has so doggedly persisted.³⁴

As a result, the National Security Council’s ability to formulate sound policy with prudence is futile if there is no hierarchical mechanism in place to manage and direct the interagency process. The inclusion of all relevant agencies in the planning and implementation process is critical for success but until the existing model of departmental silos embedded with parochial agendas is abolished we will fail to attain coherent integration throughout the interagency. For that reason, an acknowledged unified chain of command with directive authority and which is empowered to manage and direct our foreign policy through all the elements of national power must be established.

As history clearly demonstrates, diplomacy does not terminate once the hostilities commence, nor does the need for security conclude once major hostilities cease. Therefore, a robust presence of all elements of national power must be established and utilized when conducting foreign policy. Our nation’s military has won many battles but maintaining the peace and by definition winning the war has eluded us on numerous occasions. As today’s landscape clearly illustrates, military conquest does not ensure overall victory and is only one aspect of warfare. In order to facilitate a better outcome, all participants must understand that our nation has not foregone the various elements of soft power, both during and after an armed conflict.

Michael Handel, a U.S. Naval War College professor, states, “Political, diplomatic, economic, or other activities use to pressure the enemy do not cease with the onset of hostilities and may be as important as military means...the traditional paradigm recognizes that military victory alone is not enough. Military achievements must be consolidated by political and diplomatic means, since the victory achieved must be made acceptable to the enemy in order to achieve a better peace.”³⁵

“Conflict, not peace, is the natural state of human collectives.”³⁶ Our own involvement in armed conflict since the Vietnam War in Panama, Kosovo, Grenada, and Lebanon, among others, validates this position. It would be careless to ignore the reality that world history and the current state of affairs also validates this perception. Although we may yearn for mankind to be peaceful and benevolent, history shows a rather bellicose disposition. “We should keep in mind that more people have been killed...in the years of “peace” since...the great tragedy of World War II, which saw fifty million destroyed.”³⁷ It is imperative that our nation expeditiously transforms our national security structure to effectively interact with the ever-changing international environment, where peace and war can hardly be discerned.

Endnotes

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²¹ “Special Report: Policymaking for a New Era,” 179.

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